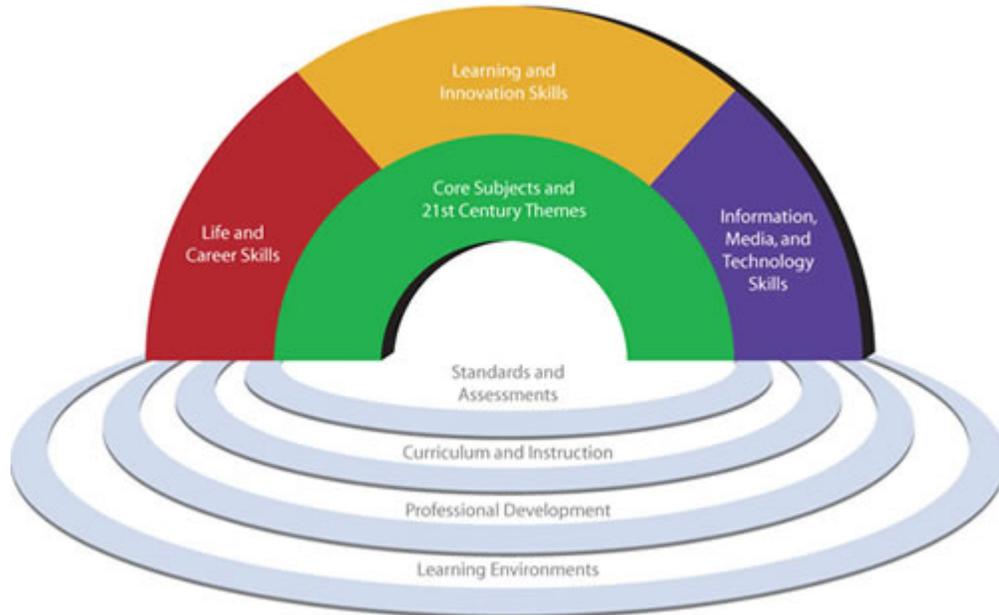


The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has developed a unified, collective vision for 21st century learning that can be used to strengthen American education. The key elements of 21st century learning are represented in the graphic and descriptions below. The graphic represents both 21st century skills student outcomes (as represented by the arches of the rainbow) and 21st century skills support systems (as represented by the pools at the bottom):



21ST CENTURY STUDENT OUTCOMES:

The elements described in this section as “21st century student outcomes” (represented by the rainbow) are the skills, knowledge and expertise students should master to succeed in work and life in the 21st century.

1. Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes

Mastery of core subjects and 21st century themes is essential for students in the 21st century. Core subjects include:

- English, reading or language arts
- World languages
- Arts
- Mathematics
- Economics
- Science
- Geography
- History
- Government and Civics

In addition to these subjects, we believe schools must move beyond a focus on basic competency in core subjects to promoting understanding of academic content at much higher levels by weaving 21st century interdisciplinary themes into core subjects:

- [Global awareness](#)
- Using 21st century skills to understand and address global issues
- Learning from and working collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work and community contexts
- Understanding other nations and cultures, including the use of non-English languages

- [Financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy](#)
- Knowing how to make appropriate personal economic choices
- Understanding the role of the economy in society
- Using entrepreneurial skills to enhance workplace productivity and career options

- [Civic literacy](#)
- Participating effectively in civic life through knowing how to stay informed and understanding governmental processes
- Exercising the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national and global levels
- Understanding the local and global implications of civic decisions

- [Health literacy](#)
- Obtaining, interpreting and understanding basic health information and services and using such information and services in ways that are health enhancing
- Understanding preventive physical and mental health measures, including proper diet, nutrition, exercise, risk avoidance and stress reduction
- Using available information to make appropriate health-related decisions
- Establishing and monitoring personal and family health goals
- Understanding national and international public health and safety issues

2. [Learning and Innovation Skills](#)

Learning and innovation skills increasingly are being recognized as the skills that separate students who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in the 21st century, and those who are not. A focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration is essential to prepare students for the future.

- [Creativity and Innovation Skills](#)
- Demonstrating originality and inventiveness in work
- Developing, implementing and communicating new ideas to others
- Being open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives
- Acting on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the domain in which the innovation occurs

- [Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills](#)
 - Exercising sound reasoning in understanding
 - Making complex choices and decisions
 - Understanding the interconnections among systems
 - Identifying and asking significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions
 - Framing, analyzing and synthesizing information in order to solve problems and answer questions
-
- [Communication and Collaboration Skills](#)
 - Articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively through speaking and writing
 - Demonstrating ability to work effectively with diverse teams
 - Exercising flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal
 - Assuming shared responsibility for collaborative work

3. [Information, Media and Technology Skills](#)

People in the 21st century live in a technology and media-suffused environment, marked by access to an abundance of information, rapid changes in technology tools, and the ability to collaborate and make individual contributions on an unprecedented scale. To be effective in the 21st century, citizens and workers must be able to exhibit a range of functional and critical thinking skills related to information, media and technology.

- [Information Literacy](#)
 - Accessing information efficiently and effectively, evaluating information critically and competently and using information accurately and creatively for the issue or problem at hand
 - Possessing a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information
-
- [Media Literacy](#)
 - Understanding how media messages are constructed, for what purposes and using which tools, characteristics and conventions.
 - Examining how individuals interpret messages differently, how values and points of view are included or excluded and how media can influence beliefs and behaviors.
 - Possessing a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information
-
- [ICT Literacy](#)
 - Using digital technology, communication tools and/or networks appropriately to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information in order to function in a knowledge economy
 - Using technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information, and the possession of a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information

4. Life and Career Skills

Today's life and work environments require far more than thinking skills and content knowledge. The ability to navigate the complex life and work environments in the globally competitive information age requires students to pay rigorous attention to developing adequate life and career skills.

- Flexibility & Adaptability
 - Adapting to varied roles and responsibilities
 - Working effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities

- Initiative & Self-Direction
 - Monitoring one's own understanding and learning needs
 - Going beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise
 - Demonstrating initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level
 - Defining, prioritizing and completing tasks without direct oversight
 - Utilizing time efficiently and managing workload
 - Demonstrating commitment to learning as a lifelong process

- Social & Cross-Cultural Skills
 - Working appropriately and productively with others
 - Leveraging the collective intelligence of groups when appropriate
 - Bridging cultural differences and using differing perspectives to increase innovation and the quality of work

- Productivity & Accountability
 - Setting and meeting high standards and goals for delivering quality work on time
 - Demonstrating diligence and a positive work ethic (e.g., being punctual and reliable)

- Leadership & Responsibility
 - Using interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal
 - Leveraging strengths of others to accomplish a common goal
 - Demonstrating integrity and ethical behavior
 - Acting responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind